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# THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

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## **Educational News and Editorial Comment**

### ANNUAL UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO DINNER

The dinner of the graduates and former students of the University of Chicago which is held annually in connection with the meeting of the Department of Superintendence will take place in Cleveland, February 28, 1923, at the Cleveland Hotel at 6:30 P.M. The list of speakers includes Dr. L. P. Ayres, Superintendent A. C. Parsons of Oklahoma City, J. O. Engleman, Field Secretary of the National Education Association, Miss May Hill, of the Cleveland Kindergarten Training School, and representatives of the School of Education Faculty. Announcement will be made later of the method of securing tickets.

### WAR DEPARTMENT'S EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

On November 16, 17, and 18 the War Department convened at Washington a conference of officers of the army and citizens interested in welfare and education for the purpose of discussing methods of insuring better training of citizens. It was pointed out by the Secretary of War in his opening address that the facts collected during the recent war made it evident that the youth of this country can be made, and ought to be made, more fit physically, mentally, and morally. This lesson of a great national need was taught in a

very emphatic way by the war, but it ought to carry over into peace times because the need of the nation for a well-equipped citizenship is as great in peace as in war. War merely makes us acutely aware of needs that have existed all along.

The conference reviewed the activities of various civilian agencies, such as boys' clubs, personnel organizations in industry, athletic associations, and schools; and army and navy agencies, such as the summer camps and the Reserve Officers Training Corps, and sought to find ways of co-ordinating the efforts of these various organized endeavors so that the total effects of their activities might be increased.

It was a very striking fact that no matter what the point of departure from which the discussion began it always led to the conclusion that general all-round training for citizenship is the only way of securing a maximum of efficiency either in peace or in war. No partial training, no one-sided development will prepare the youth of the country for life. Hence, there must be directed and co-ordinated action on the part of all agencies that train the physique or the mind or the moral consciousness.

The conference recommended the creation of a permanent commission to promote the co-ordination so obviously needed. It also indicated in a number of specific cases the possibility of selecting agencies for immediate co-operation without the creation of any new organization. For example, the various types of physical training can be promoted and systematized by turning over to the Amateur Athletics Association of America the task of standardizing the requirements for a badge which shall mean that the holder is able to perform certain simple physical acts showing that he is fit. The specification of industrial and vocational needs can be systematized through some such national agency as the National Research Council. The schools need to be informed of these various lines of standardization and to be induced to make sympathetic use of them.

The discussions of the conference made it very clear that there is a place for a national agency which shall promote co-ordination along all lines of training. To the educator it seemed evident that here was a definition of the true function of a federal department of

education. Such a department could co-ordinate many useful forms of service. It need not try to gain influence by spending federal money in doubtful forms of subsidy. It need not be vague as to the sphere of its influence. A federal department which could do in a large permanent way what the War Department initiated in this conference would arouse no objection on the part of anyone.

#### WHEN IS A BOARD OF EDUCATION A PUBLIC NUISANCE?

Chicago is passing through one of those trying periods during which the decent citizen begins to wonder whether it is possible for American cities to conduct school systems. In the first place, several members of the present Board of Education have served terms in jail on sentences imposed for contempt of court in connection with conspiracy in deposing a former superintendent. Others on whom like sentences have been imposed evaded sentence by carrying an appeal to the Supreme Court.

In the second place, more than half of the members of the present Board of Education are under indictment for dishonest appropriation of public funds. The public prosecutor has had great difficulty in getting funds and even considered for a time a plan for securing from the people of the city a popular subscription to carry on the cases and to complete the grand jury investigations which have gone far enough to reveal a series of performances which show that the schools have been conducted during recent months with chief regard to the profit of a group of appointees and on-hangers, such as contractors for supplies and building services.

In the third place, the janitorial force has been shown to have collected a slush fund, and it is known that school officers were approached with the demand that they do likewise. Fortunately, there is evidence that the school officers refused to comply with the demand.

During the period of the revelation of these conditions to the public there has been a curious manifestation of public impotency to deal with such a situation. The common citizen has not known what to do. Civic organizations have appealed to the mayor, thus giving color to a most pernicious theory—the theory that the

Board of Education is subject to the City Hall. Other honest citizens, incensed by what they have learned, have demanded of the president of the Board that he oust the offending members, when even a rudimentary knowledge of the law would make it perfectly clear that the president of the Board has no more power to oust members than has any citizen.

So the situation drags on. Unseemly controversies mark each meeting of the Board; teachers have no respect for the representatives of the people charged with the government of the schools; the superintendent and his staff keep out of the controversy as best they can; the schools do their work with as little regard as possible for the confusion.

How is this situation to be corrected? The writer has a theory which he is prepared to defend with great earnestness. This is not a situation in which school officers and school teachers can evade responsibility. The board of education in Chicago and in other cities as well can misgovern the schools only when the teachers fail to use the information which they have and fail to carry to the community a clear knowledge of what should be done.

School people with knowledge and courage can prevent such a situation, and it is their duty to do it. School people owe it to the communities which they serve to lay aside purely personal considerations and bring about sound organization.

The responsibility can be made more specific. A vigorous professional leader with access to information and with courage to go before the people with the needs of the schools, even if it costs him his personal position, could handle this and other like situations. Such a leader is needed here and in every community in the United States. He will be evolved in due time. When he comes, he will not be afraid of the board of education, or of the city hall, or of the teachers, or the principals, or the janitors. It will be interesting to see how long he will hold office. That makes some difference because he will have to be here long enough to know what he is talking about and what he is doing. But the length of his term is of less importance than his courage and directness of procedure.

Chicago is somewhat worse at the moment than other cities because it has all of the virtues of size and all of the defects of bulk.

While other communities are drawing about them their robes of exclusiveness and pride, let them take note that what each one of them needs is a first-class well-trained professional man of courage who is resolved to lead the schools into the light. Where there is no vision, the people perish, and the superintendents of this land must be relied on to furnish the vision. It is a sad sight to see the people perishing on every hand.

#### DESCRIBING VOCATIONAL QUALITIES

Stevens College of Columbia, Missouri, has turned itself into a laboratory for the development of a better and more rational education for young women. The faculty, under the guidance of Professor Charters, is working in various directions. For example, it is working on the content of the curriculum by making a study of the life activities of women and then seeking the materials of instruction which will prepare one to carry out these activities with ease and success.

In the development of this kind of a program the faculty has seen the importance of describing to itself the qualities that make for success in an individual teacher in Stevens College. Professor Charters applied the method which he has been using in the analysis of other undertakings and gave to the faculty a list of professional qualities especially appropriate to the single institution. The list is here given.

It should be noted that this is not an administrative rating scale. It is not a device for getting anyone's opinion about anyone else. It is a vocational guide to the individual. If the individual teacher can see the full list of perfections which are involved in a successful career as teacher, he can very readily begin to train himself along the lines where he is least strong.

A list of vocational qualities thus devised and used is not a selective scale but rather an instrument of training. The teacher may assume that he has a right to be in the profession because he holds his present position. The problem which confronts him from this point on is the problem of self-improvement through training. This creates an atmosphere of self-examination which is much more wholesome than that ordinarily produced by rating scales.

The list of qualities which follows should be recognized as selected with special reference to the single institution. In a public school such qualities as 34 and 16 would disappear or be replaced by other qualities especially appropriate to the public-school situation.

1. Interest in subject
2. Initiative
  - a) In expansion and new ideas in subject
  - b) In social life of the college
  - c) In matters of institutional welfare
3. Patience in the classroom
4. Persistence in training students on the job
5. Will to maintain high standards
6. Interest in individual students as teacher and adviser
7. Active interest in small groups
8. Forcefulness
  - a) With individuals
  - b) In class
9. Getting the student's point of view
10. Taste in dress
11. Care in personal appearance
12. Ability to get harmonious relations with people
13. Loyalty to convictions (courage)
14. Dependability in the performance of duties and assignments
15. Loyalty to
  - a) Rules and policies of the school
  - b) Faculty members among students
16. Participation in religious activities
17. Friendliness
18. Remembering names, faces, and personal incidents
19. Scholarship
20. Effectiveness in speech
  - a) Public
  - b) Conversation
  - c) Classroom
21. Reticence and good judgment with regard to what to talk about
22. Ability to refrain from talking too much
  - a) In class
  - b) Out of class
23. Ability to forget personal differences
24. Ability to instruct
25. Cheerfulness
26. Ability to relax
  - a) Physically
  - b) Mentally

27. Courtesy (including etiquette)
28. Refinement in speech
29. Refinement in manners
30. Self-confidence
31. Persistence in carrying out own projects
32. Control of irritation and temper
33. Good judgment in planning and making decisions
34. Active interest in helping to make things go at parties
35. Poise
36. Dignity of manner
37. Ability to enter into the institutional life of the college
38. Good health habits
39. Ability to size up people
40. Impartiality
41. Will to improve one's self
42. Ability to respect the rights of other departments
43. Ability to develop the service aspects of one's subject
44. Sense of humor
45. Sincerity
46. Ability to show appreciation of good work
47. Ability to take and use criticism
48. Personal unselfishness

#### INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION

There can be no doubt that the problem of child labor is one which is urgently in need of wise consideration. There are thousands of children in the United States who are being exploited by industry to their own very great personal disadvantage and to the disadvantage of society. The natural tendency on the part of right-minded people is to plunge into a vigorous defense of these children by attacking industry as wholly unsuited for immature human beings.

Second thought will, we believe, supply a more wholesome attitude. Industry should not and cannot be read out of the lives of children. In the long run so vital a factor in our national life is going to find its way into the experience of young people long before they are old enough to leave school. Industry must be made a part of educational experience, just as the other phases of civilization have been drawn upon to bring children to a mature relation with the world.



The article by Mrs. Reed which is published in this issue of the *Elementary School Journal* shows that the period of second thought has been reached by the friends of child-labor legislation. This is a matter for profound gratification. It opens the way for positive and constructive campaigns favorable to the broadest type of education in all of the states. It is to be hoped also that when the new federal department of education and welfare is established the whole weight of its influence and publicity will be thrown, not in the direction of prohibiting all gainful employment of children up to eighteen years of age, but in the direction of a proper use of industry as a means of training. Industry can be used if it is reconstructed and if its uses are supervised. Industry can give training in adaptability, in concentration of attention and effort, in foresight, and in skill.

In order to bring about the proper uses of industry those who are responsible for the organization of education will have to take up the problem of analyzing industry with a view to discovering how it can serve the purposes described. Educational people ought to be persuaded by the recent pronouncements of the child-labor committee and its sympathizers to undertake such analysis in the most sympathetic spirit.

#### REACTION IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL MOVEMENT

There have been published in the *Elementary School Journal* during the last six months several items which make it evident that the movement for the establishment of junior high schools has reached the inevitable third stage when there is an appreciable check in its momentum. The first stage in such a movement is that during which a few scattered experiments are set up in the face of discouraging skepticism and outspoken opposition. Then comes a period of popularity. The movement spreads, and the wise and unwise alike join with one accord in the reform. The third stage follows as the night the day. Reaction is inevitable, and in some quarters it seems to be all there is.

The reasons for reaction are not difficult to discover. Many people have been overenthusiastic about putting into the junior high school courses which will give opportunity for trying out the

abilities and tastes of adolescents. They pile up the courses until there are twelve or fourteen a week. Then comes the crash. Others grow overenthusiastic about new forms of science or new forms of foreign language or new forms of technical training and, being unrestrained by tradition in this unorganized region of education, so rapidly fill the program with innovations that teachers cannot administer it or pupils comprehend it.

There are certain subtle psychological influences which co-operate with these actual blunders to inhibit the reform. The first glow of enthusiasm is gone. No credit attaches now to the establishment of a branch of the school which a little time ago had all of the prestige of being a bold innovation. So lack of eagerness spreads where a little time ago there was a wave of energetic activity.

This third period is, on the whole, very advantageous for the fundamental movement. The accidental and undesirable elements will be thrown off. The unintelligent and timid adherents will drop away, and the junior high schools that really survive will be better examples of constructive educational achievement.

The *Elementary School Journal* will welcome and will publish any statements from those who wish to criticize the junior high school. Notices of discontinuance of junior high schools will be given especial prominence.

It may be well to add that abiding faith in the strength and permanence of the reform is in no wise affected in the minds of the editors by any or all of these notices. These are the symptoms of maturity of the movement. If there is anyone who begins to lose faith, let him look over such announcements as the following from the western, the central, and the eastern parts of the country.

The first statement is from Denver:

Parents in the northwest part of the city are rejoicing over the opening of the new Skinner Junior High School. This magnificent building is a source of pride to the residents of that part of Denver.

It occupies the entire block between West 40th and 41st avenues and Julian and King streets, consisting of 37 lots and having a frontage of 370 feet by 370 feet. The adjacent block to the east, of similar dimensions, has been added as a playground.

The building has a frontage of 300 feet and a depth of 242 feet, leaving 35 feet all around the front and sides and 93 feet in the rear.

It is designed in English Collegiate Gothic and is set on the high portion of the block for natural approach and drainage. It faces the south, thereby securing east and west lighting for the classrooms and north lighting for the art and vocational rooms.

The main or academic portion, two stories and basement, is fireproof, and the wings or vocational buildings one story, slow-burning construction. Brown Golden fire brick laid in gray mortar trimmed with terra cotta in brown pulschrome finish has been used on all exposures.

At the rear the enclosed paved court with its pergola forms an attractive feature. While ample entrances are provided, the absence of all areaways, nooks, and corners around the building is noticeable.

The first impression on entering the building is that of spaciousness and simplicity. Through the glass doors ahead may be seen the auditorium, on the left the offices, and on the right the teachers' restrooms. Sliding doors are arranged so that the central portion may be segregated from the wings which contain the classrooms. The main corridor has tile floor and vaulted ceiling with walls tinted to harmonize with the brown-stained oak trim.

The auditorium on the first floor, together with a balcony from the second floor, seats 1,000. At the back of the balcony a modern moving picture booth is provided. A large stage with dressing rooms and adequate fire escapes completes the auditorium equipment. To the right and left of the central portion are the library and study hall respectively.

On the second floor the central portion contains the art rooms, type-writing and bookkeeping rooms, general science room, and the arts crafts room, with classrooms in the wings as below.

The roof gardens for open-air classes give rise to favorable comment.

On the ground floor the central portion contains the lunchroom, capable of seating 600 children, behind which is located the boiler house, and in front of which is housed the heating and ventilating apparatus, which is so arranged that individual portions of the building may be heated independently.

Under the west wing are located the physical instruction departments with separate gymnasium, swimming pool, and dressing-rooms for the boys. Under the east wing a similar equipment for the girls is provided.

To the rear of the wings are located the vocational departments, the girls' vocational being to the east and the boys' to the west.

The corridor floors throughout are covered with battleship linoleum. All rooms have maple floors except toilet rooms, which are tile.

Passing in the building is facilitated by six stairways located at the ends and center of corridors, so that at no time is there congestion on any floor.

In the corridors on each floor are drinking fountains, supplying each segregated portion of the building, and also toilets, so that no pupil is obliged to pass up and down stairs unnecessarily.

Every room in the building is adequately lighted. The auditorium is connected with the lunchroom so that at any time when large performances

require a great number of children to be staged the facilities for getting them on and off the stage are adequate.

The boys' vocational shops are provided with rooms for woodworking, printing electrical work, sheet metal, plumbing, bricklaying, and automobile repair. The girls' vocational rooms are provided with facilities for sewing, cooking, costume designing, and fine laundry work.

The school opened with 1,194 pupils. It has a normal capacity of 1,200. It is caring for the seventh and eighth grades which have been parts of the elementary schools of this section, and most of the ninth grades which, without the Skinner School, would have been obliged to go to the North Side High School.

The school people believe that such structures afford real cause for civic pride. It is the type of building that Los Angeles, Detroit, Kansas City, Minneapolis, and hosts of other cities are erecting.

The following is from Cleveland:

The Patrick Henry Junior High School is one of the new buildings put in operation this fall. It is located at East 117th Street and Hopkins Avenue and has a capacity of 1,500 students. The building cost approximately \$850,000.

The Audubon Junior High School, built on the same plan and with the same capacity, was also completed in time for use this fall. It is located at Woodland Hills Park.

The third quotation refers to Brooklyn and is as follows:

In an address delivered on the occasion of the chartering of the St. Clair McKelway Junior High School in Brooklyn on October 11, Commissioner Graves took advantage of the opportunity to set forth some of the purposes of a junior high school and some methods that should obtain in its organization.

"The junior high school," he said, "has grown out of an effort to organize the school system in such a way as to meet the varying needs of boys and girls in their early adolescence better than was done under the old plan of a grammar school of eight years followed by four years of high school. That period of adolescence, when the boy and girl are coming into manhood and womanhood, which is marked by such a sudden access of physical and mental life, has come to be considered of the utmost significance in education. Accordingly, it has seemed well to congregate the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades, during which young people are, in general, passing through this transition period, and treat them as a separate problem. Instead of a grade distribution of eight plus four, we are coming to have six plus three plus three, though occasionally some other arrangement, such as six, four, two, or six, two, four, has been tried. The period of adolescence has thus been separated in the junior high school for special treatment. The work is divided into departments, and, instead of having a single teacher for the grade, the pupils recite to several specialists in different rooms. Some of the high-school subjects—algebra, constructive geometry,

Latin, and modern languages—are brought down into the seventh and eighth grades, more liberal discipline is introduced, and a general vision of the Promised Land of secondary education is given.

“In this way one great advantage of the junior high school is made patent. It tends to bridge the gap between the grades and the high school. Pupils who might have thought their education complete with the grammar school are encouraged to go on by the view of the high school they have already obtained. But this is the least of the merits of the junior high school, and, if the reorganization stops here, a junior high school means little more than a new grouping of pupils and courses. Unfortunately, this is as far as many school authorities have gone. More than one-half of the junior high schools are such in name only. The idea is to many only the latest fad in organization, and numerous boards of education and school officials, seizing on the general proposition, without analyzing the specific problems involved, have introduced a reorganization in which real reforms are quite neglected. Large changes—almost revolutionary in nature—in building, equipment, course, method, and faculty, are vital in the reorganization leading to the establishment of a real junior high school.

“New structures, like this in which we are assembled, planned after the model of high schools, with an auditorium, laboratories, shops, gymnasium, lockers, and sometimes a swimming pool; a new and enriched curriculum; the elective principle and the departmental method of teaching; and better trained teachers, with special preparation in the subjects they are to teach, are all demanded by the advanced ideals upon which the junior high school is built. These new institutions must undertake to furnish a program of studies suited to the varying needs of adolescent boys and girls, to take into account the individual differences among young people, to aid them in discovering and developing their natural aptitudes, to guide them wisely and carefully, while they are passing from the period of control by others to the period of self-control, to correct physical defects and build up habits of clean and healthy living, to enable them to express their social instincts in helpful service, and acquaint them with the rudiments of the social, economic, and political problems that they soon will have to face in the outside world.”